## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

2	method comprising:
3	providing a substrate for a micromachined device;
<b>4</b> 5	providing a conductor as part of said micromachined device for use in conducting electrical signals during operation of said micromachined device;
5 7	providing a protective covering for said conductor so that said conductor is disposed between said substrate and said protective covering.
1 2	2. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said protective covering comprises polysilicon.
l 2	3. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said providing a protective covering comprises depositing said protective covering as a layer of material.
l 2	4. The method as described in claim 3 wherein said layer of material protects a plurality of conductors.
l	5. The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:
2	electrically coupling said protective covering with said substrate so as to configure a ground ring around said conductor.
l	6. The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:
2	configuring said protective covering so as to form a tunnel relative to said conductor.
l	7. The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:
2	not depositing a passivation layer over an active mechanical component of said micromachined device.
l	8. A micromachined device comprising:
2	a substrate;

3	a conductor configured as part of said micromachined device;		
4	a protective covering disposed over said conductor so that said conductor is		
5	disposed between said substrate and said protective covering.		
1	9. The device as described in claim 8 wherein said protective covering		
2	comprises polysilicon.		
1	10. The device as described in claim 8 wherein said protective covering is		
2	deposited as a layer of material.		
1	11. The device as described in claim 10 wherein said layer of material		
2	protects a plurality of conductors.		
1	12. The device as described in claim 8 wherein said protective covering is		
2	electrically coupled with said substrate so as to form a ground ring around said conductor.		
1	13. The device as described in claim 8 wherein said protective covering is		
2	configured so as to form a tunnel relative to said conductor.		
1	14. The device as described in claim 8 wherein said device is configured		
2	for operation without a passivation layer disposed over said condutor.		
1	15. A method of protecting a conductor in a micromachined device, said		
2	method comprising:		
3	providing a micromachined device comprising a substrate;		
4	providing a conductor as part of said micromachined device;		
5	providing as part of said micromachined device a protective covering, whereir		
6	said conductor is disposed between said protective covering and said substrate of said		
7	micromachined device.		
1	16. The method as described in claim 15 wherein said providing a		
2	protective covering comprises utilizing polysilicon as said protective covering.		
1	17. The method as described in claim 15 wherein said providing said		
2	protective covering comprises depositing said protective covering as a layer of material.		

I	1	١٥.	The method as described in claim 17 wherein said layer of material
2	protects a plural	lity of	conductors.
1	1	19.	The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:
2	e	electric	cally coupling said protective covering with said substrate so as to
3	configure a grou	und rin	ng around said conductor.
1	2	20.	The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:
2	c	configu	uring said protective covering so as to form a tunnel relative to said
3	conductor.		
1	2	21.	The method as described in claim 15 and further comprising:
2	n	ot dep	positing a passivation layer over an active mechanical component of
3	said micromach	-	
1	2	22.	A micromachined apparatus comprising:
2	a	subst	rate;
3	a	bondi	ing pad;
4	a	condi	actor disposed over said substrate, wherein said conductor is electrically
5	coupled with sai	id bon	ding pad;
<i>c</i>		aati:	ve mechanical component disposed over said substrate, wherein said
6 7			•
/	active mechanic	ai con	nponent is configured to move relative to said substrate;
8	a	prote	ctive cover disposed over said conductor so that said conductor is
9	disposed betwee	en said	protective cover and said substrate.
1		23.	The apparatus as described in claim 22 wherein said active mechanical
2	component com	prises	a mirror.
1	2	24.	The apparatus as described in claim 23 wherein said mirror comprises
2	silicon	· ·	The same and the s

1	25. The apparatus as described in claim 22 wherein said active mechanical
2	component is exposed to the atomosphere during operation of said apparatus.
1	26. The apparatus as described in claim 22 wherein a portion of said
2	conductor is exposed to the atmosphere during operation of said apparatus.
1	27. The apparatus as described in claim 22 wherein said protective cover
2	comprises an polysilicon.
1	28. The apparatus as described in claim 22 wherein said protective layer of
2	material is operable to protect said conductor from an electrical short when a voltage of at
3	least 100 Volts is applied to said protective layer of material.
1	29. The apparatus as described in claim 22 wherein said protective layer of
2	material is configured so as to form a ground ring with said substrate around said conductor.
1	30. The apparatus as described in claim 22 wherein said protective layer of
	material is configured so as to form a tunnel relative to said conductor.
1	The apparatus as described in claim 22 wherein said apparatus is
2	configured for operation without depositing a passivation layer.
1	32. A method of providing a micromachined apparatus, said method
2	comprising:
3	providing a substrate;
4	disposing a bonding pad over said substrate;
5	disposing a conductor over said substrate, wherein said conductor is
6	electrically coupled with said bonding pad;
7	disposing an active mechanical component over said substrate, wherein said
8	active mechanical component is configured to move relative to said substrate during
9	operation of said micromachined apparatus;
10	disposing a protective cover over said conductor so that said conductor is
11	disposed between said protective covering and said substrate.

2	component comprises a mirror.			
1 2	silicon.	34.	The method as described in claim 33 wherein said mirror comprises	
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1		35.	The method as described in claim 32 wherein said active mechanical	
2	component is	expose	d to the atomosphere during operation of said micromachined apparatus.	
1		36.	The method as described in claim 32 wherein a portion of said	
2	conductor is e	exposed	to the atmosphere during operation of said micromachined apparatus.	
1		37.	The method as described in claim 32 wherein said protective cover	
2	comprises polysilicon.			
1 2	operable so as	38.	The method as described in claim 32 wherein said protective cover is ect said conductor from an electrical short when a voltage of at least 100	
3	Volts is applied to said protective cover.			
1		20		
1		39.	The method as described in claim 32 and further comprising:	
2		electri	cally coupling said protective cover with said substrate so as to	
3	configure a ground ring around said conductor.			
1		40.	The method as described in claim 32 and further comprising:	
2		config	uring said protective cover so as to form a tunnel relative to said	
3	conductor.		•	
1		41.	The method as described in claim 32 and further comprising:	
2		not dej	positing a passivation layer over an active mechanical component of	
3	said micromae	chined a	pparatus.	
1		42.	A method of configuring a micromachined apparatus, said method	
2	comprising:			
3		provid	ing a bonding pad as part of said micromachined apparatus;	

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The method as described in claim 32 wherein said active mechanical

4	providing an active mechanical component, wherein said active mechanical			
5	component is configured to move during operation of said micromachined apparatus;			
6	disposing a conductor between said active mechanical component and said			
7	bonding pad;			
8	protecting at least a portion of said conductor disposed between said active			
9	mechanical component and said bonding pad with a protective layer of material operable to			
10	protect said conductor from electrical shorts.			
1	43. The method as described in claim 42 wherein said providing an active			
2	mechanical component comprises providing a mirror.			
1	44. The method as described in claim 42 and further comprising			
2	configuring said active mechanical component so as to be exposed to the atmosphere during			
3	operation of said micromachined apparatus.			
1	45. The method as described in claim 42 wherein said protective layer of			
2	material protects said conductor when a voltage of at least 100 Volts is applied to said			
3	protective layer of material.			
1	46. The method as described in claim 42 and further comprising:			
2	configuring said protective layer of material so as to form at least part of a			
3	ground ring around said conductor.			
1	47. The method as described in claim 42 and further comprising:			
2	configuring said protective layer of material so as to form a tunnel relative to			
3	said conductor.			
1	48. The method as described in claim 42 and further comprising:			
2	not depositing a passivation layer over said active mechanical component.			
1	49. A micromachined apparatus comprising:			
2	a bonding pad;			

3		an active mechanical component configured to move during operation of said		
4	micromachined apparatus;			
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5	1 1 1 1	a conductor disposed between said active mechanical component and said		
6	bonding pad;			
7		a covering configured so as to protect at least a portion of said conductor		
8	disposed betw	een said bonding pad and said active mechanical component from electrical		
9	shorts.			
1		50. The micromachined apparatus as described in claim 49 wherein said		
2	active mechan	iical component comprises a mirror.		
٠.	active incentar	near component comprises a mirror.		
1		51. The micromachined apparatus as described in claim 49 wherein a		
2	portion of said conductor is exposed to the atmosphere during operation of said			
3	micromachine	ed apparatus.		
1		52. The micromachined apparatus as described in claim 49 wherein said		
2	covering is co	nfigured so as to protect said conductor when a voltage of at least 100 Volts is		
3	applied to said covering.			
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1		53. The micromachined apparatus as described in claim 49 wherein said		
2	covering is co	nfigured so as to form at least part of a ground ring around said conductor.		
1		54. The micromachined apparatus as described in claim 49 wherein said		
2	covering is co	nfigured so as to form a tunnel relative to said conductor.		
	3			
1		55. The micromachined apparatus as described in claim 49 wherein said		
2	micromachine	d apparatus is configured without depositing a passivation layer.		
1		56. A method comprising:		
•		71 memod comprising.		
2		providing a substrate;		
3		disposing a conductor over said substrate operable for conducting electrical		
4	signals;	disposing a conductor over said substrate operable for conducting electrical		
•	5··,			
5		configuring an equipotential barrier at least partially around said conductor		
6	operable for p	rotecting said conductor from electrical shorts.		

2	equipotential barrier comprises:	ing an
3	depositing polysilicon over said conductor; and	
4 5	electrically coupling said polysilicon with said substrate so as to for equipotential ring.	orm an
1	58. The method as described in claim 57 and further comprising	ıg:
2	electrically coupling said equipotential ring to a circuit ground.	
1 2	59. The method as described in claim 56 wherein said configure equipotential barrier comprises:	ring an
3 4	configuring a tunnel of electrically conductive material over said of and	onductor;
5	coupling said electrically conductive material with said substrate.	
1	60. The method as described in claim 59 and further comprising	ıg:
2	electrically coupling said equipotential barrier to a circuit ground.	
1	61. An apparatus comprising:	
2	a substrate;	
3 4	a conductor disposed over said substrate, said conductor operable conducting electrical signals;	for
5 5	an equipotential barrier disposed at least partially around said condoperable for protecting said conductor from electrical shorts.	luctor and
l 2	62. The apparatus as described in claim 61 wherein said equipobarrier comprises polysilicon; and	otential
3	wherein said polysilicon is electrically coupled with said substrate	so as to
•	iono ao eombolendal fino	

- 1 63. The apparatus as described in claim 62 wherein said equipotential ring 2 is configured for coupling to a circuit ground during operation of said apparatus.
- 1 64. The apparatus as described in claim 61 wherein said equipotential
  2 barrier comprises a conductive material configured as a tunnel over said conductor; and
  3 wherein said conductive material is electrically coupled with said substrate.
- 1 65. The apparatus as described in claim 64 wherein said equipotential barrier is configured for coupling to a circuit ground during operation of said apparatus.